DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 308 354 CE 052 757

TITLE	Male Single Parent/Homemaker Activity. Final Report.
INSTITUTION	Northern Kentucky Univ., Highland Heights.
SPONS AGENCY	Kentucky State Dept. of Education, Frankfort. Office of Vocational Education.
PUB DATE	30 Jun 87
NOTE	31p.
PUB TYPE	Reports - Research/Technical (143)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Child Custody; College Role; *Divorce; *Fathers; *Motherless Family; *Parent Attitudes; Postsecondary Education; Program Development
IDENTIFIERS	Kentucky (Northern)

ABSTRACT

A study was conducted to identify some unique needs of male single parents who are raising their children alone. Information on the problems of single fathers was gathered through a literature review and by surveying and interviewing male single parents in an area in northern Kentucky near Cincinnati, Ohio. Following a review of literature, questionnaires were sent to 125 male single parents in the northern Kentucky-Ohio region, with usable responses received from 30 persons. Further data was collected through interviews with 10 of the respondents. The men ranged from 22 to 48 years old, with an average age of 37. The average length of their marriage had been 10 years. The group as a whole had a high educational level, with 12 having college degrees and only 1 with less than a high school education. They also had higher than average earnings. The study found that the fathers were generally satisfied with their roles as single parents, but found some of society's expectations of fathers unrealistic. The fathers believed they could do as good a job of rearing children and caring for a home as a woman, and in most cases rated themselves as better parents than their ex-wives. They did express some problems with arranging a social life while parenting and with expressing feelings. The study concluded that the Displaced Homemaker Program at Northern Kentucky University could include a male component. The program would not need to provide job training for single fathers, but could supply information on parenting and legal rights and a place for single fathers to meet others in similar situations. (KC)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

JUL 14 1987

ED308354

FINAL REPORT

MALE SINGLE PARENT/HOMEMAKER ACTIVITY

HAROLD NOWLING, DIRECTOR

NORTHERN KENTUCKY UNIVERSITY

Project No. 12-33-540-DDEF-04-08-V5X-G2800-4836-0541-8724

JUNE 30, 1987

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☑ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

CE052757

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

ABSTRACT

The intent of this project was to identify some unique needs of male single parents who are raising their children alone. Identifying special problems of single fathers was to be obtained by surveying and interviewing male single parents in a local area. This information combined with a review of current literature on the topic was to generate a written report which would provide suggestions for possible activities and services for male single parents at Displaced Homemaker Centers.

MAJOR ACTIVITIES

Literature pertinent to the subject area was reviewed. A suitable survey instrument in the form of a questionnaire was obtained and disseminated in the local area of Northern Kentucky University. The results of the questionnaire and the individual interviews were tabulated and documented in the final report.

The director of the project attended one out of state conference on single parents to obtain more information on single fathers. The director was also interviewed by a Cincinnati Enquirer freelance writer, who wrote a male single parent article which appeared in the paper on Father's Day.

The final report was completed and is attached.

This report discusses the problems peculiar to single fathers and reports on the results of a survey completed by thirty male single parents. Further data for the report was collected through interviews with 10 of the respondents. Three of the interviews were conducted in person while 7 were conducted over the telephone. The participants in this study identified themselves as: (1) single and not remarried (2) living with a child 18 years or younger (3) having their child(ren) live with them more than half of the time (4) having formal, informal or court-ordered custody. Over 125 survey forms were distributed to potential respondents. Some names were obtained by simply asking people if they knew any male single parents who had their children most of the time. Many people can usually think of at least one single father that meets these requirements. Also, notices were placed in various newsletters and local newspapers about the study. Men called in to express their willingness to be included in the survey. Sometimes they would volunteer the name of another single parent to be contacted. Several of the returned surveys were not included because they were incomplete or the respondent did not meet the specific requirements of the survey population.

The questionnaire used was developed by Dr. Geoffrey L. Greif of the University of Maryland. He used it in 1982 to conduct a national survey of single fathers. The questionnaire is a four-page document which forms a postage-guaranteed mailer and contains both open and closed end questions.

THE NEED FOR THE STUDY

The exact number of single-parent families in the U. S. is uncertain, but most literature and studies suggest that this phenomenon is definitely on the increase. In most divorce cases (90%), the mothers will raise the children in our society (Pichitino, P.295). However, because there are more divorces than ever before, there are more opportunities for single fathers to raise

their children alone than at any time since medical science reduced maternal mortality (Greif, p. 19). When allowances are made for various nontraditional arrangements (desertions, private agreements, joint custody decisions, etc.) that place the children in their father's care, the number of single fathers is close to 1.5 million and involves some 3.5 million children (Pichitino, p. 295). What seems especially clear is the increasing trend for single fathers to take on the responsibility of raising their children. In over 90% of divorce cases involving children, custody is not contested, but when it is contested, the children are awarded to the father in approximately 35% of these cases (Pichitino, p. 295). At any rate, it seems evident that single fathering is paralleling the increasing phenomenon of single parenting in general.

Over the years much attention has been given to the characteristics, problems, and needs of single-mother families. Fathers who are rearing their children alone have been studied less frequently. This particular study will attempt to identify some unique needs, attitudes, and problems of male single parents living in that part of Northern Kentucky, which is part of the Cincinnati, Ohio, metro area. Some suggestions will be made in regard to possible activities and services which could provide help to men engaged in the always difficult job of raising children in our society. The suggestions will key on some activities and programs that might be provided by a human services agency such as a displaced homemaker center.

THE MEN INVOLVED IN THE STUDY

The average age of the men in the study was 37 with two men being the oldest at 48. The youngest was 22 years old. The average age of the ex-wife was 35. The oldest ex-wife was 46 and the youngest was 22.

The average length of the marriage for these men till their separation or divorce was 10.3 years with the longest being reported at 18 years and the

shortest at just 1 year. Twenty-eight of the respondents stated they were divorced, while one said he was separated, and one stated he had never been married.

The average length the men had sole custody of at least one child was 2.6 years. The longest was 7 years by one man while 9 men reported having sole custody for 1 year or less. The total number of children being raised by these single fathers was 54, which included 39 boys and 15 girls. Six girls and 5 boys, not included in this total of 54, were living elsewhere (mother, another relative, etc.). The average age of the children living with their fathers was 9.4 years with the oldest being 17 and the youngest being one year old.

Occupations listed by 26 of the participants are grouped into the categories that follow:

college teacher 4
service manager 2
professional 1
assembly-line worker 1
airline Supervisor 1
high school teacher 1
self-employed 1
post office 1
mechanic 2
student 1
clerk 3
locomotive engineer 1
sales rep 1
auto sales 1
consultant 1

The following chart displays the income revealed by 25 of the participants.

One was unemployed and listed benefits of $2,364.

$50,000 and over	3
$40,000 to 49,999	3
$30,000 to 39,999	8
$20,000 to 29,999	9
$15,000 to 19,999	1
$10,000 to 14,999	1
$ 5,000 to 9,999	1

The group, as a whole, had a high educational level. Twelve men had college or college plus advanced degrees. Six had high schools degrees plus

some college. Three had high school degrees plus some trade or vocational training. Five men had high school degrees, and one reported completing the tenth grade.

All the respondents were Caucasian. Religious preferences were: Protestant (17), Catholic (2), None (11). The ex-wives of these men had remarried in only 11 cases. One wife was deceased. Twenty-three men reported having been married only once. Five had been married twice--one person was married three times and one man had never been married. Twenty-four of the males were Kentucky residents; five were from Ohio and one was from Indiana.

THE RESULTS OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE

CHILD CARE AND HOUSEKEEPING

1. During school hours, where are your children? (check all that apply)

school	28
sitter	4
with me	1
day care	2
relative	2
other	0

2. After school hours, if you are not home, who takes care of the children? (check all that apply)

I am home	7
after school programs	2
relative/friend	7
they care for themselves	11
day care	2
sitter	7
I do at work	0
other	their mother (1)

3. How satisfied are you with the child care arrangements you have made? (check one)

Very satisfied	10
satisfied	13
mixed	5
unsatisfied	1
very unsatisfied	1

4. Were you usually more involved than your wife in these areas when

married? (check one response for each area)

	more involved	same	less
A. cooking	5	5	9
B. cleaning	1	10	18
C. laundry	8	8	22
D. shopping	6	13	11
E. discipline	21	11	1
F. activities	11	16	3
G. role of bread winner	22	9	0

5. Who usually takes care of these areas now? (check one response for each area)

	I do	children	we all do	other
A. cooking	21	4	1	0
B. cleaning	16	12	2	0
C. laundry	23	6	1	0
D. shopping	23	7	0	0

6. Rate how comfortable you feel in these housekeeping and child care areas.
WRITE NUMBER FROM FOLLOWING SCALE NEXT TO EACH ACTIVITY:
1 VERY COMFORTABLE 2 COMFORTABLE 3 MIXED 4 UNCOMFORTABLE 5 VERY UNCOMFORTABLE

	very comf.	comf.	mixed	uncomf.	very uncomf.
A. cooking	12	9	6	4	1
B. cleaning	4	16	8	1	1
C. laundry	5	16	8	0	0
D. shopping	17	8	4	0	1
E. discipline	9	13	6	1	0
F. activities with kids	12	12	4	1	1
G. Role of breadwinner	19	5	2	1	3

EMPLOYMENT

7. What changes have you experienced due to being a single parent? (check all that apply)

bringing work home	5
reducing travel	10
reducing work load	5
working flexible hours	10
having to miss work	8
arriving late/leaving early	12
taking new job/changing job	7
taking on additional work	1
being fired	0

quitting	1
none of these	7

8. How difficult has working and raising your child alone been for you?

very	4
somewhat	20
not at all	6

YOUR SOCIAL LIFE

9. Put a 1 by the people you see most often and a 2 by the people you see next most often when you socialize without the children.

	#1	#2
friends	14	12
dates	10	9
roomate	0	1
live-in lover	2	0
relatives	9	5
other	3	1

10. Put a 1 by the people you see most often and a 2 by the people you see next most often when you and the children together socialize with others.

	#1	#2
single parent families	5	4
two parent families	2	6
single friends of mine	5	6
friends of the children	12	6
relatives	17	7
other	0	0

11. How often do you date?

once a week or more	8
once or twice a month	8
rarely	8
never	3

12. How often do you and the children together socialize with others?

once a week or more	9	9
once or twice a month	10	10
rarely	10	10
never	1	1

13. How satisfied are you with your social life?

very satisfied	6
satisfied	6
mixed	9

unsatisfied	8
very unsatisfied	1

YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH YOUR CHILDREN

14. Most of the time are you satisfied with your relationship with the children?

very satisfied	12
satisfied	13
mixed	4
unsatisfied	1
very unsatisfied	Ø

15. How satisfied are you with how your children are doing in most areas of their lives?

very satisfied	9
satisfied	11
mixed	8
unsatisfied	2
very unsatisfied	Ø

16. Overall, rate yourself as a parent.

excellent	8
good	16
adequate	6
fair	Ø
poor	Ø

BEING A SINGLE PARENT

17. Rate how helpful these areas have been in helping you adjust to being a single parent. (write number from following scale next to each area below)

1 very helpful 2 somewhat helpful 3 not helpful 4 does not apply to me

	very helpful	somewhat helpful	not helpful	doesn't apply
A. seeing a mental health counselor:	4	4	3	19
B. talking with friends:	14	12	2	Ø
C. having an intimate relationship:	6	10	4	9
D. getting involved in religion:	2	8	5	13
E. involvement in social activities:	3	11	4	8
F. being sole parent to children:	6	8	5	7
G. getting legal help:	3	6	3	15

H. helping myself:
15 10 0 1

I. support from relatives:
13 7 2 4

J. meeting other single parents:
2 13 2 9

K. joining Parents without Partners:
2 2 3 21

L. joining a men's support group:
0 0 1 26

18. Rate how difficult these areas have been for you as a single parent. (use following scale)
1 very difficult 2 difficult 3 slightly difficult 4 not at all difficult

	very diff.	diff.	slightly diff.	not at all
A. dealing with loneliness:	5	8	9	7
B. handling children's feelings:	2	10	13	4
C. managing housekeeping:	3	3	13	10
D. arranging childcare:	0	5	12	13
E. fathering without the mother:	2	4	13	7
F. changing financial lifestyle:	5	2	14	8
G. arranging time for myself:	7	7	10	3
H. arranging time to be with children:	1	6	13	10
I. maintaining social life:	9	7	9	5
J. maintaining work level:	5	4	9	10

19. Rate how helpful these areas would be to you as a single parent. (use following scale)
1 very helpful 2 helpful 3 slightly helpful 4 not at all helpful

A. more information on child development	5	12	6	7
B. more information on single parenting:	6	12	4	7
C. wider acceptance of men as sole parents:	10	7	6	7
D. counseling services for single fathers:	6	12	4	8
E. more day care/after school programs:	3	4	7	14
F. more legal support for men:	13	4	4	7

G. more workplace flexibility:
9 5 8 7

H. more time with children:
7 7 10 5

I. having spent more time with children in the past:
6 5 10 5

Rate how much you agree with statements 20-30. (use following scale)
1 strongly agree 2 agree 3 unsure 4 disagree 5 strongly disagree

20. I feel uncomfortable being single again.
1 6 7 11 4

21. I raise my children the way I want to without interference.
7 8 1 9 4

22. I feel overburdened by the children sometimes.
4 9 3 9 4

23. The children would rather live with my ex-wife than me.
0 0 2 10 17

24. I feel some of the things I am doing with my children a woman should be doing.
4 4 6 9 8

25. I am financially secure enough to provide the basics for myself and my family.
10 16 0 1 3

26. I feel trapped in my current situation.
2 5 5 10 7

27. Having a woman spend time with my children has helped me as a single parent.
5 10 4 7 2

28. Membership in Parents Without Partners has helped my social life.
3 0 3 3 8

29. My current relationship with my ex-wife hinders my life.
5 5 4 9 6

30. Contact my children have with my ex-wife makes things easier for me.
4 8 2 7 8

RELATIONSHIP WITH EX-WIFE

31. How involved is your ex-wife with the children?

very involved	6
somewhat involved	8
slightly	12
not at all	4

32. Are you satisfied with your ex-wife's involvement with the children?

I am satisfied	16
No: She's not involved enough	10
No: She's too involved	2

33. Would you call your ex-wife for help with the children?

never	8
only in emergency	12
sometimes	9

frequently	1
don't know where she is	0

34. Do you call your ex-wife to talk about yourself?

never	22
only in emergency	4
sometimes	3
frequently	0
don't know where she is	0

35. How often do your ex-wife and children see each other?

once a week or more	10
every other week	9
once a month	2
summers	3
holidays	3
never	3
other (once every three months)	1

36. How many overnights a month do the children spend with your ex-wife?

The average was 4.9 nights per month. Two respondents indicated 15 nights. Eight respondents indicated zero nights per month.

37. Which words describe what you generally feel about your ex-wife? (check up to 2)

anger	9
love	1
hate	4
lust	0
caring	6
fear	1
distrust	15
trust	2
attachment	3
indifference	10
confusion	6
hurt	7

38. Rate your ex-wife as a mother now.

excellent	1
good	7
adequate	6
fair	5
poor	11

39. Did your break up come as a surprise to you.

yes	17
no	8
unsure	5

40. Did your want the marriage to end?

yes	5
no	20
unsure	6

41. Did you initiate the breakup?

yes	5
no	18
mutual decision	7

42. How stressful was the marital-breakup for you when you separated?

no stress	1
a little stress	1
some stress	6
a lot of stress	22

43. Are visitation decisions handled amicably now?

yes	14
no	8
somewhat	8

44. Did you want sole custody when you first knew the marriage was ending?

very much	17
somewhat	8
wanted share custody	6
did not want custody	1

45. How was it decided you would have custody? From the reasons below, check up to two that are the most applicable.

A. I won custody suit	15
B. mutual agreement	9
C. children picked me	9
D. wife wanted career	4
E. we agreed I was better parent	2
F. wife remarried	0
G. wife could no longer handle children	7
H. I abducted the children	0
I. wife wanted to avoid court fight	6
J. I offered more secure home	8
k. wife was too ill to take care of them	1
L. wife deserted us	0
M. children need male role model	1

N. other (specify) "wife had boyfriend who didn't like kids."

46. Was the decision to have the children live with you stressful for you or your ex-wife?

only for her	9
only for me	3
stressful for us both	8

not stressful for us 9

47. Do you live with any other adult more than half of the time?

yes 3
no 27
(if no, go to question #49)

48. Would you describe this person(s) as:

parent	1
lover	1
relative	1
roommate/tenant	Ø
housekeeper	Ø
other	Ø

49. Was your child's sex a factor in your wanting custody?

yes 9
no 21

5Ø. Do you have legal custody of your children?

yes	27
being legalized	1
no	2

Conclusions

The phenomenon of unmarried males rearing their minor children in the absence of a wife generates many questions for which answers are not currently available. Much of the current literature points out that further research is desirable in several important areas regarding single fathers. The process has begun, however, and should continue at a faster pace. One area, of course, needing research is the development of services and activites designed to address the unique problems of this growing population. Locally, the Bureau of Census reports a total of 860 males heading single parent family households in the eight Kentucky counties served

by the Displaced Homemaker Center at Northern Kentucky University. Most studies suggest that continued acceleration of the growth rate for this group is inevitable, and that it is clearly in need of futher study.

Single mothers and single fathers have many common characteristics in regard to problems, concerns and needs. However, several clear differences emerge from a review of single-parent literature, past studies, and the responses of the men involved in this study. The following is a list of developments and situations in our society which uniquely affects men raising their children alone. Many of these items mentioned are related to myths, misconceptions and sterotyped beliefs about the roles men and women play in society.

1. "Will you give up your kids please?" There is a myth that fathers really don't have any intensely deep feelings that are disrupted when a divorce takes place. This myth has probably made it easier for judges and courts to do what they had to do in the past. However, counselors treating divorced fathers are reporting serious psychological problems. One is called the involuntary child-absence syndrome (Meredith, p. 64). "They (fathers) know that the idea of a mother being asked to give up her children is anathema in this country, but it's not when it comes to fathers (Meredith, p. 64). A majority of the men interviewed expressed some anger and frustration with the court system in regard to getting legal and physical custody.

2. Society set up to provide for single mom The tradition of almost automatically awarding custody to mothers has operated to the benefit of the single mother in that her role is better defined (Nieto p. 473). So institutionalized is this role, compared to men, that laws to provide for the mother's and her children's social, psychological and financial support are in place and society sees this as a legitimate function of society (Nieto, p. 474). Single fathers, on the other hand, face a different situation. At a

time when they are contending with the trauma of divorce, confusion, and being the main parent to their children, the single father's environment offers little support. The role of single fatherhood has not yet been assimilated into the American culture. This corresponds to the responses of many questionnaire participants. When asked who had been most helpful to them, some typical responses were "Don't expect the system to help."--"You'll have to do it alone," or "you'll have to make it work-most people don't understand."

3. Naturally ill equipped Relative to point #2 is the fact that fathers with custody of their children are still faced with the necessity of explaining why they have assumed the responsibility of raising their kids. "Women don't have to do it, but men most frequently are perceived to be 'naturally ill equipped' to perform traditionally female roles" (Nieto p. 474). Many people believe that when it comes to home maintenance and child care, most men just cannot learn this role, and if they do, it will be a very hard task indeed since men don't have a personal familiarity with children, their needs and activities. Traditionally in most families, mothers usually do more of the hands-on work with children, and children more easily see the contributions of the mother. "But perhaps most important is that our culture discourages men from sharing their vulnerabilities and the range of their emotional life with their children or anyone else" (Meyer and Salmon). Faced with this attitude from within themselves and from mothers, the single father's adjustment to child rearing is made more difficult.

4. Absence of role-model Most men have been raised in a two-parent home, rather than by a single father. Other than a few unrealistic television shows involving single dads, men generally have lacked suitable role models in our society. "It may be a case of the blind leading the blind" (Chng and Gray, p. 37). Although the single father is becoming more visible in our

society, he is still a departure from the norm and despite his growing number in a world of single parenthood, oriented primarily towards women, he is still viewed as a rarity (Chng and Gray, p. 37). People often treat him differently from a single mother. This special treatment takes two forms. One is the "naturally ill equipped--you shouldn't even try it" treatment which has been mentioned. The other is almost a reversal of this. Dr. Geoffrey Greif points out that "Single fathers raising children breathe almost rarefied air in social situations. There is little they can do wrong. These fathers are often viewed by society as extraordinary parents because they are raising children themselves. They receive the admiration and support of friends and relatives" (Greif, p.21). During interviews, most men, when asked the question if they received this kind of positive attention, responded that they had on occasion. However, they quickly pointed out that they didn't consider themselves to be special or extraordinary at all. They just saw it as a responsibility and job that had to be done and they just "did it".

5. Single Fathers and Parenting Skills Can a man adequately provide the right child caring abilities and attitudes to raise a healthy, happy family? Most studies, including this one, consistently point to an overwhelming yes to this question. Responses to items on the questionnaire pertaining to child care and housekeeping tasks tend to support the contention that men do a very good job of coping with these chores. They may not always master them, but then neither do single mothers. Furthermore, some men reported these tasks as being the least of their worries and responded that it was "easier to get a handle on those kinds of problems." Much of the research indicates that single fathers, particularly those who choose child custody and who have previous experience with child care and household tasks, are satisfied with their lifestyles and with their children's adjustment and development

(Briggs, Waters, p. 23). The difficulty for many men is of course trying to reconcile their parenting role with all the demands of the traditional male role. Nevertheless, one study comparing child-raising strengths between single fathers and married fathers, concluded that "Single fathers shared some assets with married fathers, but they (single fathers) were more supportive of creative behavior during childhood, more tolerant of immaturity in their young sons and daughters, more willing to be interrupted by children when necessary, more able to show control with children and foster self-reliance, more respectful of childrens' strengths and preferences, and more relaxed during play with them" (Strom, et. al.,p. 86). Of all the relationships that make up the life of the single father, the one that gave the fathers in the survey the greatest satisfation was their relationship with their children. Additionally, these fathers also rated themselves highly as parents.

6. Mother substitutes Despite his many problems, the single father has a much easier time getting mother substitutes for his children than the single mother does in getting father substitutes. Because women in our culture are generally more comfortable with children, it will be easier to find a sister, aunt, mother, housekeeper, or friend to provide the children with some exposure to female companionship (Chng and Gray, p.38). This contention generally agrees with responses in the survey. Finding babysitters to help out at all times was difficult, but they did report that mothers, sisters, and female friends helped "watch the kids." None of the men, however, reported having a housekeeper.

7. Social Isolation Some literature suggests that single fathers, more than single mothers, face a serious problem of social isolation, especially in the first year after divorce or separation. It varies of course with each man, but some men become so preoccupied with rasing the family that they leave no

time for relaxation or social life. The majority of the survey respondents rated the areas of dealing with loneliness; arranging time for myself and maintaining social life as very difficult to slightly difficult. Approximately 50% rated these areas as having been very difficult and difficult for them as a single parent. Several fathers in interviews commented that it was easy to get caught up in being "super father". Some felt sorry for the kids being raised without a mother and wanted to make up for it by being the very best father they could be. This often involved spending a great deal of time with the kids at the expense of the father's social life. One father remarked that " Now with this AIDS thing, a social life doesn't seem like much to miss." In any case, romance, dating, and an active social life are difficult areas of adjustment for the single dad especially when he sometimes tries to be the perfect father.

8. Social-Sexual life of the father. The social-sexual life of the single father generally comes under greater scrutiny by family and community because men are generally not considered to be the best keepers of moral standards. While most married adults rarely feel the need to justify their sexual conduct to their young, single fathers often do (Chng, p. 38). When questioned about this societal attitude, most of the interviewed men agreed that they felt pressure to " be careful " about their lifestyles and activities. Most said they wouldn't want to risk appearing to be an unfit parent because they wouldn't want to jeopardize their custody rights. One father told of how after his divorce, neighbors were reluctant to let their children play with his children at his home. This was especially true if their children were girls. He said it took some time for them to realize he was an " O K, safe, protective parent" like themselves. In response to the question -- How satisfied are you with your social life ? -- eighteen noted feeling mixed, unsatisfied or very unsatisfied.

ADDRESSING THE NEEDS OF SINGLE FATHERS

Displaced homemaker centers could be a logical service provider in meeting the needs of custodial fathers. Most single parent support groups for years have been for women. The Displaced Homemaker Network, through its centers, offers a variety of services. Its goals and objectives are clear in what they want to achieve for women. However, when possible, some centers with adequate funding, staff, facilities, and an inclination to do so, might choose to provide some support services to male single parents. The emphasis should be on support services because the need appears to be greatest there rather than on job training for financial independence. Although single fathers may have money problems, this is one area where they have an advantage over single mothers. The term " feminization of Poverty " appears frequently in current research on social and welfare economic issues of our society. This is illustrated in the fact that single mothers comprise the majority of single parents and statistics indicate that 42.9% (2.7 million) single mothers live below the poverty level, while only 18% of the men in the same situation are poor (Chng p. 39). In many cases this is why the father was awarded custody or at least had an advantage in gaining custody. The majority of the men in this study, in particular, had higher than average incomes; thus, job training would be of little use to them. Therefore, in the area of support services (lectures, counseling, workshops, seminars, conferences, support groups), a Homemaker ReEntry Center might expand its activities and meet the needs of single fathers living in the counties they serve. The center would also have to promote and advertise these activities in order to make men aware of the services. Even though most of the men in this study felt satisfied with their lives, most of them also expressed an interest in some type of support group. A few belonged to Parents without Partners, but most had minimal or no contact at all with other single parent

groups. They definitely felt the need for some support in varying degrees from their environment.

From the questionnaire and interview responses, the following topics emerged as suggested activities that could be helpful to fathers adjusting to being a single custodial parent.

1. Parenting classes - Emphasis should not be on surrendering their traditional role, but on expanding their role as care givers (nurturing, meeting emotional and physical needs of kids). Research consistently shows that men can be just as good as women in parenting skills. They need to be told that a happy healthy family depends on much more than whether two parents or just one is present. The factors and traits that make for a successful family could be discussed in these classes (Staff, U.S. News p.58).

2. Knowing community resources - When and Where to get help and advice-- Knowledge of agencies and organizations designed to help single parents combined with their corresponding fees, activities, and locations would be very beneficial. Presentations and lectures specifically geared to single father concerns could be arranged by staff members.

3. All male support groups - A place to talk about common troubles- A time magazine article stated that the most difficult task for a man was to learn how to talk to other men about anything really personal (Thompson, p.147).

4. Newsletter for single fathers - In Scottsdale, Arizona, a small magazine entitled " Single Dads' Lifestyles " has over 2000 subscribers.

5. Values clarification - This is especially true in the area of career development. The single father could use some counseling in realizing that he may have to shift values, accept less income, change his view of himself as a worker and try to adapt to conflicting demands.

6. Laws and custody rights - Understanding their rights under the law would relieve much anxiety. Research shows that a positive relationship between the ex-wife and the single father is best for everyone involved. Both parties need to know where they stand legally to gain a quicker adjustment to single parenting.

7. Society's view of male single parents - Men need to understand and adjust to the perceptions of others in regard to custodial fathers. "The theme that emerges again and again is that society does not understand these men." (Greif, p. 97). These men need to recognize these perceptions and learn how to deal with them.

8. Social-Sexual activities - This is important in the early period of adjusting to single fatherhood. Meeting other single parents, getting involved in social activities, and having intimate relationships are activities that need attention. Discussion topics related to these issues would be of great interest to single fathers.

In conclusion, it can be stated that in regard to single-parent families, more children in the future will be living part of the time with each parent. Social services providers and families themselves should be aware that research, including this report, indicates that fathers can and do provide good homes for, and develop close relationships with their children. However, change is never easy and like anyone undergoing a major transition in lifestyles, these fathers need support and encouragment in this new role in our conservative society.

Works Cited

Briggs, B. & Walters, C., (1985, March). Single-Father Families. Young Children, pp. 23-27.

Chng, C. & Gray, B., (1983, November/December). Health Education, pp. 37-39.

Daniels, S., Flemming, G. & Strom, R. (1984, October). Parenting Strengths of Single Fathers. Elementary School Guidance and Counseling, pp. 77-87.

Greif, G. (1982, December). Dads Raising Kids. Single Parent, pp. 19-23.

Meredith, D. (1985, June). Mom, Dad and the Kids. Psychology Today, pp. 63-67.

Meyer, R. & Salmon, P., (1987, February 13). Fathers Appear to be More likely to Feel Unappreciated. Louisville Courier Journal, p. 3.

Nieto, D. (1982, November). Aiding the Single Father. Social Work, pp. 473-475.

Pichitino, J. (1983, January). Profile of the Single father: A Thematic Integration of the Literature. Personnel and Guidance Journal, pp. 295-299.

Staff. (1983, November, 28) One-Parent Family: The Troubles and the Joys. U.S. News & World Report. p. 58.

Thompson, D., (1981, June, 15) In California: Unswinging Singles. Time. pp. 147-148.

SPA 04

RECEIVED
APR 11 1986
VOC ED

VOCATIONAL EDUCATION
Project Proposal

Eligible Recipient Northern Kentucky University

Address Louis B. Nunn Drive
Highland Heights, Kentucky 41076

Category: (Check One)
- ☒ Single Parent/Homemaker
- ☐ Sex Bias & Stereotyping
- ☐ Research/Exemplary
- ☐ Personnel Training
- ☐ Curriculum Development

Project Director Harold Nowling Phone _____

Contact Person Dr. Clifford Shisler, Director of Research, Grants & Contracts Phone 572-5136

Project Title: Male Single Parent/Homemaker Activity

Project Duration: From: 7/1/86 To: 6/30/87

I. Project Description

A. The need for the Project (Describe the intent, importance of the problem, relevance of problem, relevance or problem to the community, and statistical data).

Males as single parents have been thrust into a role for which they are not prepared. Since 1970, the United States has seen a 127% increase in the number of single fathers with the number continuing to grow. Nationwide, the Bureau of Census reports 893 thousand fathers heading single parent families involving more than one million children. The Bureau of Census reports a total of 860 males heading single parent famil households in the eight Kentucky counties served by the Northern Kentucky University ReEntry Program.

B. Project Objectives (Relate to planning, management, implementation, instructional activities and materials development, i.e. what are you going to accomplish).

1. To identify the unique needs of male single parents as they rear children alone while trying to make a living.
2. To acquire insights into the main personal concerns and problems of bachelor fathers
3. To survey a sample of the male single parent population regarding daily problems, experiences, and psychological adjustments.
4. To collect and compile data in a written report which will provide suggestions for possible activities and services for male single parents at Displaced Homemaker Centers.

SP/H-04:02

C. Procedures (indicate items such as: setting, participants, personnel, resources available, implementation plan and instruments):

The project will review current literature and research with information on male single parents. Emp-asis will be placed on collecting data which enhances the understanding of men raising children alone. A staff member will also conduct personal interviews with at least five male single parents in order to gain knowledge of personal experiences on single parenting. After analyzing the topical literature and interview results, a printed survey will be developed and administered to at least seventy-five to one-hundred male single parents. The survey respondents will be volunteers from the communities of

(continued on following page)

II. Products and Services (appropriate to the Funding Category) to be delivered and include the process for quality control:

Product to be delivered is a report identifying the unique needs, attitudes, and problems of male single parents. The report will include suggestions on how information could be used to provide services and activities to aid the male single parent at established Displaced Homemaker Centers in Kentucky.

III. Evaluation Plan (Describe how the objectives will be measured and the plan for determining achievements/success. Indicate items such as: field tests, steering committees, analysis of innovative practices, etc.).

Evaluation of the project will be assessed by the state sex equity coordinator as to its compreheniveness and applicability.

IV. Time Schedule (List major events and activities and indicate month of occurence):

MAJOR ACTIVITIES	MONTHS J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J
1. Review current research	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
2. Conduct personal interview		X		X		X	X					
3. Develop survey			X		X			X		X		
4. Mail, collect, and analyze survey	as needed											
5. Planning	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
6. Write and edit summary report											X	X

PROCEDURES (CONTINUED)

C. Northern Kentucky. The survey and personal interview results on male single parent concerns will be compared with the results of the literature review and written into a summary report.

VOCATIONAL EDUCATION PROJECT
Budget Request 19 86/87

Eligible Recipient Northern Kentucky University

Vocational Region Region VII Eligible Recipient Code _____

PROJECT TITLE Male Single Parent/Homemaker Activity

Item	Requested Funds	Approved Funds	Budget Explanation
Personnel Cost (Salaries, Benefits, etc.)	$ 3,400		See attached budget
Operating Costs (Equipment Under $300, Equipment Maintenance, Supplies, Utilities, etc.)	553		
Travel	662		
Equipment (More than $300 items)	-0-		
TOTAL	$ 4,615	4615.	

Requested [signature]
Chief School Administrator

Approved [signature]
Associate Superintendent for
Vocational Education

For KDE use only
12 33 540 DDEF 04 08 V5X
Account No: G2800 4836 0541 8724
OVE Monitor: _____
OVE Co-Monitor: _____

BUDGET NARRATIVE
VOCATIONAL PREPARATION FOR MALE SINGLE PARENT/HOMEMAKER ACTIVITY

PERSONNEL COSTS	AGENCY	NKU
Coordinator		
1. 10% of 12mons. @ $1410	$ 1,692	
2. Fringe benefits, 25% salary & wages	680	
Total Coordinator	$ 2,372	
Secretary, TBA		
1. 10% of 12mons. @ $857	$ 1,028	
2. fringes, N/A	-0-	
Total Secretary	$ 1,028	
TOTAL PERSONNEL COSTS	$ 3,400	
OPERATING COSTS		
Postage		
Survey	$ 88	
Office - 12mons. @ $5.00/mon	60	
Office Supplies	60	
Tape recorder & tape	100	
Copying		
Survey - 100 copies, 5 pages @25¢ ea.	125	
Office - 12mons. @ $10/mon.	120	
TOTAL OPERATING COST	$ 553	
TRAVEL		
Interviews - 10@ 50mile/trip, 18¢ a mile	90	
In-State - 2 trips @ 200 each, 18¢ a mile	72	
Dissemination/information 1 trip @ $500.	500	
TOTAL TRAVEL	$ 662	
TOTAL DIRECT COSTS	$ 4,615	
NKU Indirect Cost Contribution, (75.1% Personnel)		$ 2,553
TOTAL COST	$ 4,615	$ 2,553

Date 7/2/86
Fiscal Year 87

Check One:
NEW XX
REVERSE
ADDITION

KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
ALICE McDONALD, SUPERINTENDENT
OFFICE OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

BUDGET REQUEST

Region 7
School Northern KY University

Fund	Cab.	Dept.	Prog.	Organization	Function	Location	Budget Unit	Gr. No.	Gr. FY	Sub Gr. No.
12	33	540	DDEF	04 -08	V6X	G2800	4836	0541	87	24

PERSONNEL SERVICES	Amount Requested	DOA Only	Amount Approved
110 Salaries		E111	
120 Fringe Benefits		E121	
130 Other Pers. Costs		E131	
140 Prof. Contract Costs		E141	
160 Other		E161	
TOTAL PERS. COSTS (100)			
OPERATING EXPENSES			
210 Utilities/Htg. Fuel		E211	
220 Rentals		E221	
230 Maintenance/Repairs		E231	
240 Postage/Related Serv.		E241	
250 Misc. Services		E251	
260 Telecommunications		E261	
270 Computer Services		E271	
310 Items for Resale		E311	
320 Supplies		E321	
340 Commodities		E341	
361 In-State Travel		E361	
362 Out-of-State Travel		E362	
363 Non-State Emp. Travel		E363	
370 Misc. Commod./Other		E371	
TOTAL OPER. EXP. (200/300)			

GRANTS/BENEFITS	Amount Requested	DOA Only	Amount Approved
430 Grants Non-State Agen.		E431	
440 Fin. Asst-Non State Emp.		E441	
450 Care and Support		E451	
460 Subsidies (Coll/Univ)		E461	4,615.00
TOTAL GRANTS/BENEFITS(400)			4,615.00
CAPITAL EXPEND/OUTLAY			
601 Furn/Fix/Ofc. Equip.		E601	
604 Instruments/Apparatus		E604	
605 Motor Vehicles		E605	
607 Library Books		E607	
620 Computer Equipment		E620	
TOTAL CAP. EXP/OUTLAY(600)			

GRAND TOTAL			4,615.00

KDE/MIC Approved
4000-864

Requested by: _____

Approved by: William D. Pratt
OFFICIAL